

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE
165 CAPITOL AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106**



Sarah Healy Eagan, J.D.
Child Advocate

OCA Advisory Committee Meeting
Minutes – December 19, 2023

OCA Staff: Sarah Eagan, Child Advocate; Christina D. Ghio, Associate Child Advocate

Members Present: Jennifer Collins, Edwin Colon, Shelley Geballe, Jeanne Milstein, and Rudolph Brooks

Members Not Present: None

1. Minutes

September meeting minutes reviewed. Motion to approve minutes by Shelley Geballe. Second by Rudy Brooks. All in favor. None opposed. Minutes for the September meeting approved.

2. OCA Report Updates

The Child Advocate provided an update on recent projects and reports.

OCA recently released the fatality review of death by homicide of Liam Rivera. The report made systemic recommendations for improving aspects of the system, including adult probation supervision, improving/creating more structure around DCF safety practice for infants and toddlers, creating a legislative working group to look at representation of children, and more structured oversight by juvenile court in aspects of child welfare. OCA has communicated with Chief Court Administrator, who is receptive to OCA's recommendations in concept. OCA anticipates recommendations for working group as part of the bill for the children's committee. OCA is meeting with legislators around recommendations of that report.

OCA also released a report regarding a DDS licensed community living arrangement (CLA). There are about 700-800 CLAs. This report was related to an incident involving a DCF committed youth and a young adult woman in the CLA. OCA's review led to widespread systemic investigation. OCA is following upon the recommendations in this report and meeting with legislators.

OCA continues its review regarding fentanyl intoxication deaths. OCA is seeking additional strategies to distribute naloxone to any caregiver with a history of substance abuse disorder. OCA has met with the Chair of Public Health committee, who is supportive. There are some obstacles to having DCF workers

distribute Naloxone to parents. Jeanne Milstein questioned what the barriers are, noting that in New London, they are distributing Naloxone in the community. They have boxes in the grocery store where people can help themselves. She questioned why DCF would not be able to distribute Naloxone if New London is able to distribute it in this self-serve way. The Child Advocate noted that the subcommittee of ADPC met today to discuss how to increase distribution and an update on this could be provided at the next meeting.

The CFRP held a summit regarding infants and toddlers. The Summit heard from Mom's Project in Colorado. They are distributing naloxone kits to all caregivers following birth of a child. This may become a recommendation.

3. OCA Staffing Updates

The ACA position application period is complete and OCA is awaiting a list from HR. OCA will provide additional questions to help narrow the list of applicants to be interviewed.

OCA has two slots open on the Advisory Committee. One is the position previously held by Toni Boucher, appointed by the Senate Minority Leader. OCA has followed up with the Senate Minority Leader's office to request that they appoint someone to that position. OCA is following up on the other appointment as well.

4. Discussion Regarding Advisory Committee Annual Evaluation

Advisory Committee members requested copies of prior evaluation reports. There was discussion about the best process for drafting the report. It was agreed that OCA staff would provide a draft regarding work complete, utilizing the OCA annual report, to the Committee and then the Committee would make any changes and additions it deems appropriate. The Committee will communicate with each other, without involvement of the Child Advocate, to complete the report. The goal for completion of the report is the end of January 2024.

5. Investigation Updates

Motion to go into executive session to discuss confidential OCA investigations by Jeanne Milstein, seconded by Rudy Brooks. All voted in favor.

Executive Session held.

Motion to end executive session by Shelley Geballe. Seconded by Rudy Brooks. All voted in favor.

6. Scheduling

Next meeting: January 23, 2024 at 5:30

Meeting Adjourned.